

A RICHMOND DISASTER.

Burning of the Spotswood Hotel.

A DREADFUL CHRISTMAS GREETING.

Seven Lives Lost and Many Persons Missing.

Another Horror Shrouding the City of Disasters in Gloom.

INCIDENTS OF THE FIRE.

SPECIAL TELEGRAM TO THE HERALD.

RICHMOND, Dec. 25, 1870.
Not a year has passed since a fire, suddenly and without a shadow of prevention, this city was plunged into a depth of gloom almost without parallel in the annals of any city on this continent by the falling in of the floor of the Court of Appeals in the Capitol building. Since then flood has spread desolation throughout the State to add to the list of horrors that have marked the last decade in this beautiful land, and now I have to chronicle a calamity which, coming at the time it does, makes us feel that it is written by the fates, "City of the Seven Hills, thou art doomed."

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE SPOTSWOOD HOTEL.
Has again ravished it and added to the destruction of property and loss of life. Desolation, destruction, death, come hand in hand with the fire. Last Christmas Eve, when never, even in the darkest days of our civil strife, was aught but a time of merry-making and rejoicing throughout the old Dominion—found nearly every house in the city the scene of festivity. Christmas morning found the cypress where the holy had been the night before. At half-past two o'clock A. M. a canopy of fire hung over the whole city. In one short hour, certainly, five if not more souls were, not hurried, but dragged slowly into eternity, through the most horrible death-agony known to humanity. Only Dante, in his wildest flights of poetic imagination, could have depicted one-half the horrors of

THE BURNING OF THE SPOTSWOOD HOTEL.
Not since the burning of the old theatre has Richmond witnessed such a scene. Bright, without any brick partitions above the first floor, the flames having once gotten a headway, any attempt to check them was worse than futile. In a few minutes after the fire was discovered by the watchman, who happened to pass the pantry where a stove had been negligently allowed to burn, and which, becoming red hot, communicated to the floor, it had crashed with lightning speed from ceiling to gable, and by the time the Fire Department had become thoroughly organized for work the whole interior of the immense structure was one sheet of living flame—mad, wild, hissing flame—in its restless, desolating sweep, hurrying athwart the frosty sky masses of burning timber, like some volcanic demon laboring to disgorge itself—now silent, as if to gather new strength, now roaring, crackling, thundering, as if striving to drown

THE SHERIES OF ITS VICTIMS.
The hoarse, confused cries of the firemen, the shrill whistles of the engines and the agonizing hum of the hurrying crowd of citizens below ready to do and die in the cause of humanity, but powerless.

Here is a mother bereaved from the frozen streets, and just as the cry of fire had started her from her slumbers, most agonizing of cries, "SAVE MY CHILDREN!"

here a brother looking frantically for a sister, or a wife pleading for some tidings of her husband, who when last seen was waving her and smoke to save some relation; there a man stupefied by horror and fear; beside him another, whose gallant spirit knows not the meaning of the latter word, and who, having saved one friend, is preparing to rush again into the jaws of death to rescue another. Here is young

SAM HINES, who has just brought two friends from the fourth story out and rushes back for a third, who is seen at the window of his room from the street below; but now the stairway is in flames. Only one chance remains; it is to jump. He prepares for the fearful leap. Brave hearts will catch him, if he crushes them. Too late; the fire had claimed him. A volume of black, stifling smoke envelops him; angry, forked flames leap like serpents' tongues from between the mass, and his agonized cry is in eternity.

Creeping, writhing, hissing through the halls of the water's heat—rushing as if springs fresh from its lair—the demon fire, now pouring in from the windows adjoining the hotel. Then the scene, if possible, becomes more fearful than before, mingling as it does the falling of walls and the crashing of the floors with the other

At one time it appeared as if the destruction of the whole block was inevitable. The night was the severest of this winter, the spray from the streams falling in hail upon the half-dressed inmates of the hotel, as they stood watching the means of egress from the building, to see if the next that rushed out was a brother, sister, husband, wife, son or daughter, or to give a word of encouragement to some one poised between two horrible forms of death and powerlessness, except to cry out above the din below, "SAVE ME! I AM BURNING!"

This ghastly appearance rang out from more than fifty windows, and rang only once. It is not known positively that there were more than five actual victims of the flames, but the universal fear is that this does not approximate the number. One short hour and the fire had done its worst. Its progress had been stayed, but two-thirds of the block fronting Main street and running back nearly the same distance was a fiery charnel lake, still smoking and seething, but conquered.

When THE FIRE FIRST BROKE OUT, and the wild cry rang through the house, repeated from mouth to mouth with frantic and despairing energy, your correspondent, whose room was in the left wing of the building, in the third story, woke up, and, after getting on some clothes, rushed into the long passage, now filled with smoke. A terrible scene met the eye through the smoky atmosphere. The forms of half-dressed males and females could be seen rushing, they knew not whither, and shrieking with despair. Proceeding further to the head of a staircase all egress was blocked up with an indiscriminate mass of luggage and people trying to escape. Rushing then to the right wing of the building another staircase was reached which brought out to the second floor, and here the long corridors that served as a place to conduct the flame through the building. Continuing on, the ground floor is reached at last, and then the cold, icy air strikes the face.

A PITIFUL SCENE.
Here I saw the wife of Captain McPhail in her bare feet, with a blanket wrapped around her, while her husband, half-dressed, carried their infant child, whose piteous cries could be heard above the din of the falling timbers and crashing floors. But here was

AN ACT OF CHIVALRY worthy of mention. A young man named Towers sprang forward, pulled off his shoes and gave them to the lady, and, divesting himself of his overcoat, wrapped the child in it and carried it a distance of several squares to the house of a friend of McPhail's. Again there was another cry.

"A MAN AT A FIFTH STORY WINDOW!" I looked up, and there was C. A. Schaffer, the State Superintendent of Public Printing, clinging to the sill of a fifth story window. His feet reached the upper part of glass in the fourth story window, and he kicked out the panes. The places he kicked the glass, moved his hands continuously to the cap of the window, and then descended to the sill of that window. In this way the gallant Schaffer came from story to story amid the plaudits of the crowd, by whom he was seized and carried out of danger when he reached the ground.

AMONG THE VICTIMS
In Mrs. Kersey, the housekeeper of the hotel, in

vain was she urged by the proprietor, Mr. Luck, to escape; but she wanted her trunk. This she got, but then she wanted to save something else, and at last all the avenues of escape were cut off and she was swallowed up by the devouring element. Besides this lady and Hines among the known victims are Erasmus Rees, famous as clerk of the Libby Prison during the war, Samuel Robinson, of New Orleans, cigar vendor, and H. A. Thomas, agent of the panorama of Bunyan's Pilgrims Progress; W. H. Pan, of Danville, Va., United Sales mail agent, and J. B. Fariss, messenger of the Southern Express Company. A number of strangers on the register are missing, some of whom may have gone off on the morning train.

THE FOLLOWING NAMES, however, appear on the register who are not believed to have gone off:

Samuel Friedman and Henry Kroetz, New York.
D. N. Cannegore, of Cincinnati; C. George and E. H. Andrews, of Syracuse, N. Y.; J. H. Wilcox, of Lynchburg; N. Beismann, of Washington; A. Leil, of Tampa, Fla.; H. G. Krotte, of New York, and John H. Holman, Jr., of Jackson, Tenn.

W. H. H. Stowell, Congressman elect from the Fourth district, was registered and is also missing.

The Spotswood Hotel was valued at \$140,000, and insured in Northern companies, represented by D. S. Walker, for \$60,000. M. S. Branch & Company were insured in the North British and Mercantile for \$5,000. Messrs. Sublett, Luck & Co., proprietors of the Spotswood, had their furniture insured for \$20,000, and their wines and carpets for \$7,000, in the North British Company.

The National Insurance Company, of Baltimore, loses \$5,000, and the Continental, of New York, \$3,000. All the goods ready for delivery in the cellar of the Southern Express Company were destroyed. The company's money bags are buried in the ruins.

Among those who have very narrow escapes were M. Maffei, of New York, engineer of the James River structures; S. A. Pearce, of Columbia, S. C., private secretary to Senator Sprague; and Mrs. J. Angell, proprietress of the theatre. The De Lave Troupe lost their baggage. The hotel register was found to-night, and there are only six strangers not accounted for. It is probable some of the citizens have taken some of them to their houses. The name of the housekeeper burned was Mrs. Emily Kennerly.

The business houses destroyed were Messrs. Branch & Curran's grocery store, Adams' Express Company's office, Messrs. machine store and other smaller stores.

The sun that went down last night upon the happy anticipations of all classes of citizens rose with a glory seldom equalled but to flash back on the terrors that hung from

THE BURNING OF THE SPOTSWOOD HOTEL.
The great number of fatal rainfalls like death and destruction decked in diamonds. It is impossible to gather anything like a full statement of the incidents of this last catastrophe, or to depict its horrors to-day. It is as if another funeral pall had been spread over the entire community.

A MIRACLE PLAY.

Brilliant Success of "The Christ Child's Feast," Last Night, at the Grand Opera House.

The "miracle play" forms one of the few bright gleams of poetry that illumined the medieval ages, and many modern poets and essayists notably Longfellow in "The Golden Legend" have attempted, not without success, to bring home to us the strangely quaint charm that still clings to it in the memory of scholars. It had, however, two grave and even conspicuous faults—coarseness and blasphemy. With these few words of introduction we bring to the notice of our readers the interesting entertainment at the Grand Opera House last evening, under the auspices of the Society of St. Paul's Church. Although announced simply as a "Kindergarten, or Christ Child's Feast," it revived all the more pleasing features of the old miracle play, while it carefully avoided its grosser blemishes. There was the same curious mingling of saints and school children and angels and Mary and Joseph, and the shepherds of Bethlehem; the same quaint display of rich colored dresses and the same tone of child-like belief in the absolute power of mother Church, and the unquestionable reality of her traditions and legends. No mere charming or appropriate mode of celebrating a Christmas Sunday evening could have been devised. The play opened with a tableau of school children, and the first scene was a scene of domestic life in a plain white mansion. In the centre were a boy with a red cap fringed with gold, and a girl with a white cap and a white dress, and with a wand of authority, while the side groups were relieved by two maidens bearing the green flag of Erin and our own dear many-starred banner. After several scenes, by the aid of the machinery of the festival, had been rendered with a singularly pleasing effect by the fresh voices of the children, the scene shifted to a scene of domestic life, and the scene, vested in his show-splendid robe and fur cap, and bearing in his hand a bundle of switches and in the other a bag of gold, to reward the evil and punish the good children according to the deeds of the past year. The next part exhibited the episode of the shepherds and the announcement of the birth of the Messiah in the stable—not a grove, but a realistic stable with a realistic manger—in which the King of Kings was born. The closing tableau consisted of scenes around the Christmas tree, three of which were of the most beautiful and charming, and the play concluded with a chorus of thanks to the givers of the entertainment and a chorus of praise to Him whose hand is ever quick to minister to the wants of his creatures.

The entertainment could scarcely have been better managed. The scenery was of the most beautiful, the advertised time was exceeded, and reflected the greatest credit on all concerned in its production. The singing was excellent, the orchestra superb, the scenery and appointments splendid and yet tasteful. Indeed, the whole affair was so brilliant a success that there can be little doubt that the Society of St. Paul's Church will have secured one of the most charming features of the New York celebration of the festival.

PICKING POCKETS IN CHURCH.

In the bright, crisp morning air of yesterday Maria Scheppler, of 183 East Houston street, sallied away to the German Catholic church in Third street to attend the Christmas mass. The church was crowded.

In the pew where Maria knelt knelt also Augustus Crawford, who seemed to be full of the spirit of the occasion, singing his hymns with the fervor of the most pious devotion. When the holy service was about over and the congregation began to leave the church Mrs. Scheppler observed Augustus putting his hand in his pocket and checked him as he went out. Disliking to make any alarm in church she waited till the bell rang outside, when she accosted him and asked him to follow her. He obeyed, and she followed him to the door, where she saw a police officer before he had run many blocks. Yesterday Crawford was taken before Justice Schermer, who held for the sum of \$100 and held to answer.

A GERMAN VICTIM IN HOBOKEN.

The district of Hoboken known as Shippenville was alarmed at one o'clock yesterday morning with the yell of two belligerent individuals, named John Anderson and Henry Millop. The men had a dispute about the Franco-Prussian war, which was settled by a fight. The fight was a desperate one, and the result was that the present German army in France would ever recapture the Rhine. Anderson was a desperate encounter took place, the result of which was that John's phlegm was battered out of its former shape, though he escaped with his life. The fight was a desperate one, and the result was that John's phlegm was battered out of its former shape, though he escaped with his life. The fight was a desperate one, and the result was that John's phlegm was battered out of its former shape, though he escaped with his life.

A CHILD IN FLAMES.

A melancholy accident occurred yesterday afternoon about two o'clock in Jersey City. A little girl named Julia Barrett, seven years of age, was with her mother visiting some friends at No. 10 Morgan street. At a moment when no person was near the child her clothes caught fire from the stove and she ran out of the door enveloped in flames. One of the inmates of the house came to the rescue, but in the eagerness to grasp the child in his arms he turned her head towards the flames. Finally, when the flames were extinguished, the poor child was so fearfully roasted that her condition is hopeless. She was taken to her residence, No. 10 Morgan street.

RUM AND STEEL IN BROOKLYN.

Shortly after five o'clock last evening two young men—Joseph Shandley and Thomas McElroy—both of whom were under the influence of liquor, quarrelled while standing on the corner of Hudson avenue and Plymouth street. The wrangle ended in a sanguinary manner by Shandley drawing a knife and stabbing his antagonist in the back, just beneath the left shoulder blade. The young man, who was named Shandley, was taken to the hospital, and the other was taken to the station house in York street, where he was held for examination. The wound is not considered fatal.

THE PROPOSED ANNEXATION OF CANADA TO THE UNITED STATES.

Correspondence Between the Canadian Patriot and the Canadian Union Club, of New York.

THE SUBJECT OF THE ANNEXATION OF CANADA TO THE UNITED STATES.

The subject of the annexation of Canada to the United States is one of the most important and interesting questions of the day. It is a question that has been discussed for many years, and it is one that is likely to be discussed for many years to come. It is a question that is of great importance to the people of both countries, and it is one that is likely to be of great importance to the people of both countries.

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THE WEATHER IN WEST VIRGINIA.

STAYTON, Va., Dec. 25, 1870.
The weather in West Virginia and the valley of Virginia is intensely cold, the coldest experienced for many years. Mercury touched zero here at days break. At Lexington it was twenty-four degrees below freezing point. At Greentown, White Sulphur Springs, W. Va., it was forty degrees below freezing point, and ice six inches thick.

METEOROLOGICAL RECORD.

Sunday, Dec. 25—11:55 P. M.
SIGNAL SERVICE, UNITED STATES ARMY.

radical party.

LETTER OF PROFESSOR G. BATHCHELOR TO L. J. PAPINEAU.

NEW YORK, NOV. 23, 1870.

HONORABLE AND HONOURED SIR—The Canadians of New York have just founded a political association under the name of the "Canadian Union Club," the object of it being to bring the "union of Canada with the United States."

I send you the circulars and resolutions published by the club, accompanied by a pamphlet on the unification of North America, which has supplied the brains of the foundation. I have no doubt that the cause of the lively interest you always take in the emancipation of our native country, I thought you would be glad to learn what we propose to do to